



restoreing dc

A Monthly Update for Businesses and Consumers in the District of Columbia

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★ ★ ★
Anthony A. Williams
Mayor

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CLEAN AND SAFE

by Tom Litke

Welcome to *reSTOREing DC's* latest issue, the place to find out about topics that concern the District's neighborhoods. We look to engage the neighbors, merchants, and developers and we cover the topics that encompass the District's renaissance, and what you can do to be a part of it. Commercial revitalization is the subject but quality of life is the vision. We discuss strategies that employ tools from the four corners of revitalization: economic development, community design, event promotions and community organizing.

Many people are eager to create a commercial business district that inspires a sense of pride and place. They long for the day when visitors will refer to their community with superlatives like "lively" and "family-friendly." But sometimes folks forget that the transformation of distressed neighborhoods can take upwards of ten years. Residents skip ahead in their desire for revitalization, but forget to implement the essential first step: Clean and Safe.

For those addressing Quality of Life issues, Clean and Safe is where the conversation begins. It's what residents complain about the most and it's where concerned communities work the hardest.

Clean and Safe issues are those that focus on public safety or cleanliness of the Commercial District. There are many facets to Clean and Safe, but crime, litter, and vandalism are often the most prominent deterrents to neighborhood revitalization.

What is your neighborhood doing to combat these issues? There's no shortage of tasks that can be undertaken, and every bit helps. Here are just a few ideas that YOU can do NOW—for more ideas, check *reSTORE DC's* website (restoredc.dc.gov):

- Report broken streetlights and public amenities to 727-1000
- Pick up trash on your commute to work or on the street you live
- Report graffiti to 727-1000
- Let your local police station know of trouble spots in your area (to find out the telephone number for your local police station, go to mpdc.dc.gov look up "police districts and PSAs (Police Service Areas)"

—then click on one of the seven PSAs)

- Call 727-1000 about overflowing (or missing) waste receptacles
- Remove outdated flyers and promotional materials from display windows
- Shop with businesses that maintain their stores (inside & out!)

Often the basic Clean and Safe responses are skipped in favor of doing fun events—don't make the same mistake! Organizing fun events is fine, but before you get to planting flowers, have a trash clean-up day. Before you organize a block party, organize a nightly neighborhood watch, where residents walk the community to deter criminal activity. Unfortunately, in the case of Clean and Safe issues, most people remember

the image of negative situations before they ever notice the positive, so there is greater impact in removing the negative situations first.

Last month, *reSTORE DC* hosted a full-day symposium on "Addressing Crime & Grime Effectively on Main Street." Every seat was filled

with community activists who shared their successes and their concerns. Presentations were conducted by local leaders from Adams Morgan, U Street and Mount Pleasant who discussed topics on building partnerships, "Green Teams" and anti-graffiti programs. If you would like to become involved, read on. In this issue, we will introduce you to three DC residents who do more than their part to keep DC clean. We will introduce you to the Mayor's Citywide Call Center, 727-1000, and we will show you ways that communities can address Clean and Safe issues.

Tom Litke serves as an Advisor to DC Main Streets. Previously, he worked as Executive Director in a nationally-recognized Main Street program in Boston.



DOING THEIR PART

Testimonials from three fellow citizens who keep communities clean

Chuck Brazie, *AdamsMorgan MainStreet*
Starting 2 years ago as part of AdamsMorgan MainStreet's cleanup day, I headed a team responsible for removal of graffiti and posters/flyers—which improves the appearance and security of our business area. It became clear that frequent removal before massive accumulation was more manageable. Now, when I walk through Adams Morgan, I carry a scraper for cutting taped flyers and 'pasted stickers'. Frequent removal serves notice that Adams Morgan is not a dumping ground, and to discourage those who post these illegal items.

David Toland, *Resident of North Capitol*
In my neighborhood the streets are often strewn with trash, particularly on the weekends. After

lots of complaining about the problem I decided to stop griping and take matters into my own hands by walking through the neighborhood on Sundays and picking up the trash myself. Hopefully, people will see my effort and consider changing their ways.

Cindy Daven, *Main Street Anacostia*
During the Spring of 2001, I maintained the flower planters at the corner of MLK and Good Hope. It only took a few moments each morning to tend to the 3 planters—I'd fill several jars with water every other day, and head down the street to give the flowers their "drink" for the morning—helping in my small way to beautify the business district and the environment.

CLEAN AND SAFE ACTIVITIES FOR MAIN STREETS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Inventory abandoned buildings, contact owners, press for lease or sale
- Do a neighborhood assessment: Develop a baseline and measure progress as you implement your program
- Review health and safety codes, crime reports: Monitor progress
- Manage a schedule of monthly District services provided
- Poll merchants, residents and visitors on perceived safety and cleanliness concerns: Develop workplan
- Manage a Façade Improvement Program
- Coordinate and manage a property's rehabilitation
- Attend public safety meetings: Provide input
- Conduct site visits: Compare your community to others for safety, cleanliness

WE'VE MOVED!

Our new address is
801 N. Capitol Street, NE
(co-located with the Department of
Housing and Community
Development and
Office of Planning)

USING THE MAYOR'S CITYWIDE CALL CENTER IS EASY!

The Mayor's Citywide Call Center—**727-1000** or online at <http://src.dc.gov>—is the District residents' main pipeline to basic city services provided by the Department of Public Works, the District Department of Transportation, and the Department of Health (Vector Control).

When constituents contact the Call Center, their requests are entered into the service request tracking system. Constituents are given the expected time frame for delivery and a tracking number so that they can check on the status of their request.

The volume of requests has increased significantly, from approximately 50,000 in 1999 to an expected 1,000,000 in 2005. Along with this notable rise in the number of requests is the considerable improvement in the number of services delivered on time.



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